

**James K. Joseph**  
**Director**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

April 11, 2016

**CONTACTS:**

Patti Thompson 217-557-4756

## **IEMA, American Lung Association Announce Winners in Student Video, Poster Contests**

*Winning entries raise awareness of radon hazards, importance  
of testing homes*

SPRINGFIELD – Hundreds of students from across the state recently used their creative talents to increase public awareness about the hazards of radioactive radon gas in homes. More than 500 posters and 65 one-minute YouTube videos were submitted to the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and the American Lung Association in Illinois (ALA-IL) for consideration in the annual contests.

“Contest participants took a critical message about the serious health hazards of radon and presented it in creative ways that will grab the public’s attention,” said IEMA Director James K. Joseph. “These posters and videos are great tools to help people understand why it’s so important to test their homes and take steps to reduce high levels of radon if it’s detected.”

The winning entries are available on the IEMA Radon website at [www.radon.illinois.gov](http://www.radon.illinois.gov) and on the ALA-IL website at <http://healthhouse.org/radon/il.cfm>.

Poster contest winners and their prizes include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – Levi Moore, homeschooled, Vienna, \$200
- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Michael Sweeney, St. Athanasius School, Evanston, \$150
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – Kayla Conklin, Farmington Central Junior High School, Farmington, \$100

The three winning posters will compete against posters from across the country in the 2017 National Radon Poster Contest sponsored by the Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors.

Video contest winners include:

- 1<sup>st</sup> place – St. Teresa High School, Decatur (\$1,000 to winning student group plus \$300 for the high school)

245\*\*16

-more-

- 2<sup>nd</sup> place – Washington Community High School (\$750 prize to winning student group, \$200 to the high school)
- 3<sup>rd</sup> place – University Laboratory High School (\$500 prize to winning student plus \$100 for the high school)

In addition, seven videos received honorable mention. A \$250 prize will be awarded for each of the following entries:

- Metea Valley High School, Aurora
- Bolingbrook High School, Bolingbrook
- Neuqua Valley High School, Naperville (two separate entries)
- Hinsdale High School, Darien
- Wheaton Academy, West Chicago
- Washington Community High School (separate entry from 2<sup>nd</sup> place winner)

The top 10 videos are now competing in a “most views” contest in which they promote viewership of their videos through social media. The contest, which ends April 18, encourages development of students’ marketing and outreach skills while also increasing the number of people who see the radon message. The student or students who created the video with the most views will receive a \$300 prize.

The prize money for all winners was provided by the ALA-IL.

“It is estimated that approximately 21,000 deaths in the U.S. each year are caused by radon-induced lung cancer,” said Angela Tin, vice president of environmental health for the American Lung Association of the Upper Midwest. “Radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer and can be prevented by simply testing your home.”

Radon is a colorless, odorless, tasteless gas that comes from the radioactive decay of naturally-occurring uranium in the soil. It can enter homes and buildings through small cracks in the foundation, sump pumps or soil in crawlspaces. Approximately 1,200 people in Illinois die each year from radon-related lung cancer.